



COMDTINST 3500.6
August 11, 2010

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 3500.6

Subj: EXERCISE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND NATIONAL EXERCISE PROGRAM
IMPLEMENTATION ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ref: (a) Department of Homeland Security National Exercise Program Implementation Plan,
dated December 12, 2008
(b) Contingency Preparedness Planning Manual (Vol III), COMDTINST
M3010.13(series)
(c) [Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8](#)
(d) Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction # 3020.47, DoD Participation in the
National Exercise Program (NEP), dated January 29, 2009
(e) [Department of Homeland Security Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation
Program](#) (HSEEP)
(f) Commandant (CG-535) Guidance Letter 04-07, dated September 7, 2007
(g) National Exercise Division, National Level Exercise Project Guidance
Version 1.0, dated January 2009.

1. **PURPOSE.** This Instruction establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides organizational structure for United States Coast Guard (USCG) Exercise Program Management, enclosure (1). It establishes expectations for participation in the National Exercise Program (NEP) as outlined in reference (a). This Instruction is consistent with references (a) through (g).
2. **ACTION.** All CG unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commandants, and chiefs of HQ staff elements shall comply with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release is authorized.
3. **DIRECTIVE AFFECTED.** None.
4. **BACKGROUND.** The NEP was created to comply with reference (c) as a means to reinforce training standards, evaluate readiness and support the National Preparedness Goal. As this program evolved, the need for clear delineation of roles and responsibilities within

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participating agencies became evident. Meanwhile, the Department of Defense (DoD) promulgated policy guidance on National Level Exercises in reference (d). This Commandant Instruction codifies exercise roles and responsibilities within the Coast Guard. It defines the terms of reference and processes associated with the NEP, the Department of Homeland Security's policies and procedures, and significant areas of interaction with key interagency partners, such as DoD.

5. DEFINITIONS. The following terms are listed alphabetically, then defined in a logical sequence from the Department's National Exercise Program elements down through — and integrated with — the Coast Guard's exercise program structures:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • Exercise Director (ED) | • Multi-Year Training & Exercise Plan (MTEP) | • Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW) |
| • Exercise Planning Team (EPT) | • National Exercise Program (NEP) | • Trusted Agents |
| • Exercise Planning Team Leader (EPTL) | • NEP Objectives | • USCG Component |
| • Exercise Planning Team Member | • NEP Exercise Tiers | • Venue Exercise Planning Team (VEPT) |
| • Exercise Sponsor (ES) | • Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) | |
| • Improvement Plan (IP) | • Principal-Level Exercise (PLE) | |

- a. National Exercise Program (NEP). A national, interagency-wide program that serves as the principal mechanism for:

- (1) Examining the preparedness of the United States Government (USG) and its officers and other officials; and
- (2) Adopting policy changes that might improve such preparation.

- b. NEP Exercise Tiers. The NEP categorizes exercise activities into four tiers. These tiers reflect the relative priority for national and regional Federal interagency participation. NEP Tier I is the highest and NEP Tier IV is the lowest. USG exercises are assigned to NEP Tiers based on interagency consensus as to how closely they align to USG-wide strategic and policy priorities. The NEP exercise tiers are as follows:

- (1) *NEP Tier I Exercises*. NEP Tier I exercises are White House directed. They focus on USG-wide strategy and policy-related issues that challenge the national preparedness of the United States. Tier I exercises are conducted with the participation of all appropriate department and agency principals (or their deputies), other key officials, and all necessary staffs and operations centers and operational elements at both the national and regional/local levels. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-National Exercise Division (NED) is the lead planning agent for all NEP Tier I exercises.

- (a) *National-Level Exercise (NLE)*. A single annual operations-based NEP Tier I exercise focused on White House directed, USG-wide strategy and policy-related issues. NLEs require the participation of all appropriate department and agency principals, or their deputies. In addition to department and agency principals, NLEs generally require participation of operations centers and operational staffs and elements.
 - (b) *NEP Principal-Level Exercise (PLE)*. A discussion-based Tier I exercise for USG principals (senior officials) focused on establishing and clarifying roles, responsibilities, strategy, and policy for USG activities. PLEs require only department principals or deputies backed by subject matter experts, but without operations centers and staffs. Typically, four PLEs are conducted each year. One PLE will normally serve as a preparatory event for the annual NLE.
- (2) *NEP Tier II Exercises*. NEP Tier II exercises are Federal department and agency exercises with a focus on USG strategy, policy, and procedural issues meriting priority for national and regional Federal interagency participation. All appropriate federal departments and agencies support NEP Tier II exercises through either the National Exercise Simulation Center (NESC) — with Federal regional simulation — or more fully as determined by each department or agency's leadership. The Federal department or agency sponsoring a designated NEP Tier II exercise is responsible for leading the coordination, planning, conduct, and evaluation of the exercise. DHS/FEMA NED is responsible for coordinating Federal national interagency simulation of a NEP Tier II exercise through the NESC, and for coordinating Federal regional simulation necessary to support the exercise. NEP Tier II exercises take precedence over NEP Tier III exercises in the event of resource conflicts. Federal departments and agencies will nominate an exercise for consideration as a NEP Tier II exercise during the annual exercise programming process. The NEP Executive Steering Committee (ESC) recommends no more than three NEP Tier II exercises annually.
- (3) *NEP Tier III Exercises*. NEP Tier III exercises are other Federal exercises focused on plans, policies and procedures at the regional, operational or tactical levels. Tier III exercises may also have organization-specific objectives that do not require broad interagency headquarters-level involvement to achieve exercise objectives. Participation at the national level is at the discretion of each department or agency.
- (4) *NEP Tier IV Exercises*. NEP Tier IV exercises are exercises in which State, territorial, tribal, local governments, or private sector entities are the primary audience or subject of evaluation.
- c. NEP Objectives. Tier I and II exercises feature objectives at a strategic or policy level. However, per reference (a), these exercises may also include capabilities-based and procedural objectives of an operational or tactical nature. Strategic and policy objectives take precedence over operational and tactical objectives whenever these conflict. NOTE: for the purposes of CG Contingency Exercise integration, Areas will serve as Venue Workgroup Chair for all operational and tactical venues as part of Tier I/II NLEs.

- d. Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan (MTEP). A five-year service-wide exercise plan with associated preparedness training (e.g. ICS) and support. Deployable Operations Group (DOG) and Exercise Support Team (EST) support are identified for the first two to three years of the schedule. The overall goal of the MTEP is to facilitate intra- and interagency coordination. This should meet the goals of the NEP, the Coast Guard, State and local governments, and the private sector.
- e. Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW). An internal or external meeting of potential exercise participants for the purpose of exchanging information on proposed training and exercises for upcoming years. The TEPW affords exercise stakeholders the opportunity to present their respective preparedness analyses, training and exercise requirements, and available resources. This helps stakeholders to synchronize efforts so as to reduce time, cost, and resources associated with individual preparedness efforts.
- f. Exercise Sponsor (ES). The ES is the organizational element that prescribes the policy and obtains funding for the contingency exercised enclosure (2). The ES fulfills exercise program management responsibilities outlined in the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). Among other duties, the ES:
 - (1) Establishes the minimum frequency and types of exercises required to validate a contingency plan and force capability.
 - (2) Assigns the Exercise Director.
 - (3) Ensures the exercise schedule proposed through the Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan meets policy and legislative requirements.
 - (4) Develops resource proposals to ensure adequate funding for exercise support requirements.
 - (5) Provides annual policy updates for contingency planning and exercises through the Strategic Planning Directive (SPD).
 - (6) Provides strategic policy guidance (for the contingency) to the Exercise Director and Exercise Planning Team.
 - (7) Reviews After-Action Reports and takes-for-action issues related to policy and resources.
- g. Exercise Director (ED) The ED supervises the primary activities required to be exercised for the contingency, enclosure (2). The ED fulfills exercise project management responsibilities outlined in the HSEEP. Among other duties, the ED:
 - (1) Solicits participation in the Exercise Planning Team.
 - (2) Assigns the Exercise Planning Team Leader.
 - (3) Creates the support base with other entities and senior officials.
 - (4) Articulates the Coast Guard position to interagency/other agency exercise partners.
 - (5) Ensures alignment of Coast Guard objectives and participation with exercises sponsored by other agencies.

- (6) Approves products developed by the Exercise Planning Team (e.g. objectives, scenario, exercise documentation, After-Action Report).
- (7) Approves the Concept of Exercise and exercise spend plan.
- (8) Approves AAR.
- h. Exercise Planning Team Leader (EPTL). As chair of the Exercise Planning Team, the EPTL develops the exercise project management timeline and the exercise project management assignment list (Note: The CG formerly called this position the Lead Planner). EPTLs also assign exercise responsibilities, provide overall guidance, and monitor the development of the exercise planning process. There is only one EPTL per exercise. Among other duties, the EPTL:
 - (1) Coordinates planning team meetings.
 - (2) Develops and maintains the project management timeline.
 - (3) Coordinates assignment of planning team members to working groups.
 - (4) Coordinates assignment of controllers and evaluators.
 - (5) Delivers Planning Team products to the ED for approval.
- i. Exercise Planning Team (EPT). The EPT is responsible for all aspects of exercise design, development, conduct, and evaluation. The EPT may use an Incident Command System structure as depicted on figure 3-1 of enclosure (3). The EPT develops operational and tactical exercise elements to support the ES strategic policy objectives. The EPT includes representatives from each major participating organizational element and participating entity. There is only one EPT per exercise. Among other duties, the EPT:
 - (1) Develops exercise products (e.g. objectives, evaluation guides, and exercise plans).
 - (2) Coordinates logistics.
 - (3) Acts as controllers and/or evaluators.
 - (4) Coordinates with the Venue Exercise Planning Team.
- j. Exercise Planning Team Member. EPT members are subject matter experts. They serve as the representative of their respective command or organizational element. Among other duties, EPT members:
 - (1) Develop exercise products (e.g. objectives, evaluation guides, Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) and exercise handbooks and plans).
 - (2) Coordinate logistics.
 - (3) Act as controllers and/or evaluators.
- k. Venue Exercise Planning Team (VEPT). This operational-level planning team develops operational and tactical exercise elements to support the EPT objectives. There can be

multiple VEPTs per exercise. The Area will be the CG Venue Planning Team Leader for Tier I/II exercises.

- l. Trusted Agents. These are individuals who are members of — or assist — the EPT. They are trusted not to reveal scenario details or elements to players prior to, or during the exercise.
 - m. Improvement Plan. This captures corrective actions to be taken based on an After-Action Report (AAR), assigns corrective action items to responsible parties, and establishes target deadlines for their completion. CG improvement planning is tracked via the Remedial Action Management Program (RAMP) module in the Contingency Preparedness System (CPS), COMDTINST 3010.19 (series).
 - n. Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR). This is the USCG Component required to take corrective action(s) identified in the AAR and IP.
 - o. USCG Component. Generic term for any Coast Guard command, unit or office (i.e. organizational element).
6. DISCUSSION.
- a. The USCG adopted the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) on 07 September 2007, by Commandant (CG-535) Guidance Letter 04-07, reference (f).
 - b. The Office of Contingency Exercises (CG-535) develops strategic policy for CG contingency exercises. Each Command level is responsible for contingency exercise program management and implementation at its respective level.
 - c. Exercise conduct — specifically the implementation of the NEP in accordance with this Instruction — is the responsibility of all field commanders.
7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES. Consistent with references (a) through (g), the CG shall:
- a. Support USG policy to strengthen the preparedness of the United States by fully implementing the NEP.
 - b. Provide comprehensive, effective, and synchronized program management for the CG Contingency Exercise Program and the NEP.
 - c. Integrate the NEP, other agency, and stakeholder exercises with the existing CG Contingency Exercise Program.
8. RESPONSIBILITIES. Each Coast Guard command has distinct responsibilities regarding the management of the USCG Contingency Exercise program. There are also responsibilities for integration with the NEP and NLE project management in coordination with reference (g). These roles and responsibilities depend upon the NLE Tier; see enclosure (1).

9. ORGANIZATION. NLEs require clarity of organizational relationships and planning team hierarchy to facilitate integration into the NEP. The CG Exercise Planning Team Construct, enclosure (3), for NLEs has been established to illustrate internal command relationships.
10. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
11. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

Brian M. Salerno /s/
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Deputy Commandant for Operations

Encl: (1) Roles & Responsibilities
(2) Designated Sponsors & Directors
(3) CG NEP Organizational Construct
(4) Acronyms

Roles and Responsibilities

1. ***COMMANDANT, U. S. COAST GUARD*** shall:
 - a. Participate in, or otherwise designate an exercise Commandant, for all NEP Tier I and CG sponsored Tier II exercises.
 - b. Approve level of participation and planning for CG involvement in NEP Tier I exercises.
2. ***COAST GUARD DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR OPERATIONS (CG-DCO)*** shall:
 - a. Oversee the development and implementation of CG Exercise Policy.
 - b. Serve as CG Exercise Sponsor. DCO may also designate the internal ES for all Tier I and II exercises in accordance with reference (a) and this Instruction. ES shall designate the appropriate staff to participate as members of the EPT.
 - c. Approve level of participation and planning for CG involvement in NEP Tier II exercise.
 - d. Participate, or otherwise designate an exercise Commandant, for all non-CG sponsored NEP Tier II exercises.
 - e. Approve strategic and policy objectives for Tier I and II exercises.
 - f. Approve input to DHS from CG participation in Tier I exercises that require national level attention.
3. ***ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR MARINE SAFETY, SECURITY & STEWARDSHIP (CG-5)*** shall:
 - a. Implement this instruction and provide oversight of NEP implementation.
 - b. Recommend strategic and policy objectives for Tier I and II exercises.
 - c. Actively participate in applicable Tier I and II exercises.
4. ***DIRECTOR OF RESPONSE POLICY (CG-53)*** shall:
 - a. Function as the CG ED for all Tier I and II exercises in accordance with the NEP, as depicted on figure 3-2 of enclosure (3).
 - b. Assist DCO in designating the DCO Office or Offices that shall act as the CG ES, as mentioned above. See enclosure (2) for the list of designated sponsors and directors.
 - c. Develop strategic and policy objectives for Tier I and II exercises.
 - d. Prepare CCG, COMDT (CG-DCO) and COMDT (CG-5) leadership, as appropriate, for exercises in which they will be participating.
 - e. Approve AAR for Tier I and II exercises and submit upon completion of exercises.

5. **CHIEF OFFICE OF CONTINGENCY EXERCISES (CG-535)** shall:

- a. Function as CG EPTL for all Tier I and II exercises in accordance with reference (a) and this Instruction.
- b. Serve as the CG Representative on the DHS Exercise & Evaluation Program Steering Committee (DHS EEP SC). The DHS EEP SC is the primary conduit for elevating Coast Guard-related NLE issues to the DHS inter-agency and the NEP Executive Steering Committee (ESC) per reference (a).
- c. Serve as the lead for all National Exercise Division (NED) Subcommittees.
- d. Oversee CG Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan (MTEP) development.
- e. Validate and publish the CG MTEP.
- f. Serve as Coast Guard representative to the national-level TEPW.
- g. Lead development of CG Exercise Policy and Organizational Doctrine.
- h. Participate in the DoD semi-annual Worldwide Joint Training and Scheduling Conference (WJTSC).
- i. Coordinate with applicable DCO Office Chiefs to review AAR/Lessons Learned (LL) submissions and adjudicate those submissions through the Remedial Action Management Program (RAMP).
- j. Assign Remedial Actions Issues from exercise and real world AARs and LLs to the Offices of Primary Responsibility (OPR).
- k. Manage and maintain the Coast Guard application, Contingency Preparedness System (CPS).
- l. Develop the CG-wide contingency exercise budget. Develop and submit Resource Proposals (RPs) as required.
- m. Act as the CG representative to Interagency Planning Teams. Keep other organizational elements informed of the planning process. Seek input, as appropriate, to ensure accurate representation of Coast Guard capabilities and equities from all echelons of the Coast Guard Command and Control Structure.

6. **OPERATIONAL COMMANDERS (LANTAREA & PACAREA)** shall:

- a. Participate in the CG Planning Team for Tier I/II NEP exercises to represent the interest of the operational commander; provide input on strategic and policy objectives; and when operational/tactical play is included in the exercise, translate strategic objectives into operational/tactical objectives.
- b. Act as ES representative to provide leadership and oversight for District-led Tier III/IV exercises and track post-exercise corrective actions.
- c. Assign ED from appropriate Area Office for Tier III exercises, as depicted on figure 3-3 of enclosure (3).

- d. Act as the VEPTL for Tier I/II NEP exercises that include CG operational/tactical level play.
- e. Assign CG EPTL or VEPTLs for all Area Tier III exercises.
- f. Validate and submit USCG MTEP to Commandant (CG-535), annually.
- g. Participate in national and regional-level TEPWs.
- h. Participate in the DoD semi-annual WJTSC.
- i. Review proposed budgets and recommend budget reprogramming necessary to support all exercise requirements to Commandant (CG-535).
- j. Provide operational SMEs.
- k. Provide exercise design SMEs.
- l. Approve AAR for Tier III exercises.

7. ***FORCE READINESS COMMAND*** shall:

- a. Participate in annual MTEP process and validate requests for the Deployable Operations Group (DOG), training and Exercise Support Team (EST) support.
- b. When requested, provide planning support to Exercise Design Teams for CG exercises utilizing DOG/DSF/EST resources.
- c. Provide input for post-exercise AAR/LL development to exercise sponsor for consolidation into CPS.

8. ***DISTRICT COMMANDERS*** shall:

- a. Act as ES representative to provide leadership and oversight for Sector-led Tier IV exercises and track post-exercise corrective actions.
- b. Serve as ED for Tier III exercises, as assigned by respective Area Commander, as depicted on figure 3-3 of enclosure (3).
- c. Assign CG EPTL or VEPTLs for all District-led Tier III exercises.
- d. Review input from District Offices and Sector Commands regarding the CG MTEP and submit to Area Commander annually.
- e. Participate in regional and State-level TEPWs.
- f. Review Sector and District budgets and provide recommendations to Area Commander.
- g. Develop and submit all operational and tactical objectives for District and NEP Tier III exercises, as appropriate.
- h. Through collaboration with Area and Sectors, establish expected level of operational play at select Sectors for all tiered exercises.

- i. Approve AAR for Tier III exercises.

9. ***SECTOR COMMANDERS*** shall:

- a. Serve as ED for Tier IV exercises, as depicted on figure 3-4 of enclosure (3).
- b. Assign EPTL or VEPTLs for all Sector-led contingency plan exercises.
- c. Develop and submit annual MTEP to District, to include budgets and resource requests.
- d. Participate in State and local-level TEPWs.
- e. Develop objectives for Sector exercises and State or local exercise participation.
- f. Approve AAR for Tier IV exercises.

Designated Exercise Sponsors & Directors

Coast Guard Exercise Sponsors

<i>CG Contingencies</i>	<i>NEP NLE Thematic Emphasis*</i>	<i>Sponsoring Office</i>
Alien Migrant Interdiction	Domestic incident: non-terrorism	CG-531
Anti-Terrorism – Area Maritime Security Training and Exercise Program (AMSTEP)	Domestic incident: terrorism	CG-532 & CG-544
Civil Disturbances	Domestic incident: terrorism <u>or</u> non-terrorism	CG-532
Combatant Commander Support	International terrorism <u>or</u> International/defense crisis	CG-532
Continuity of Operations	Domestic incident: non-terrorism	CG-533
Counter-Terrorism	Domestic incident: terrorism	CG-532
Major Marine Disaster	Domestic incident: non-terrorism	CG-533
Mass Rescue Operations	Domestic incident: non-terrorism	CG-534
Military Outload	International/defense crisis	CG-532
Natural Disaster	Domestic incident: non-terrorism	CG-533
Oil and Hazardous Materials	Domestic incident: non-terrorism	CG-533

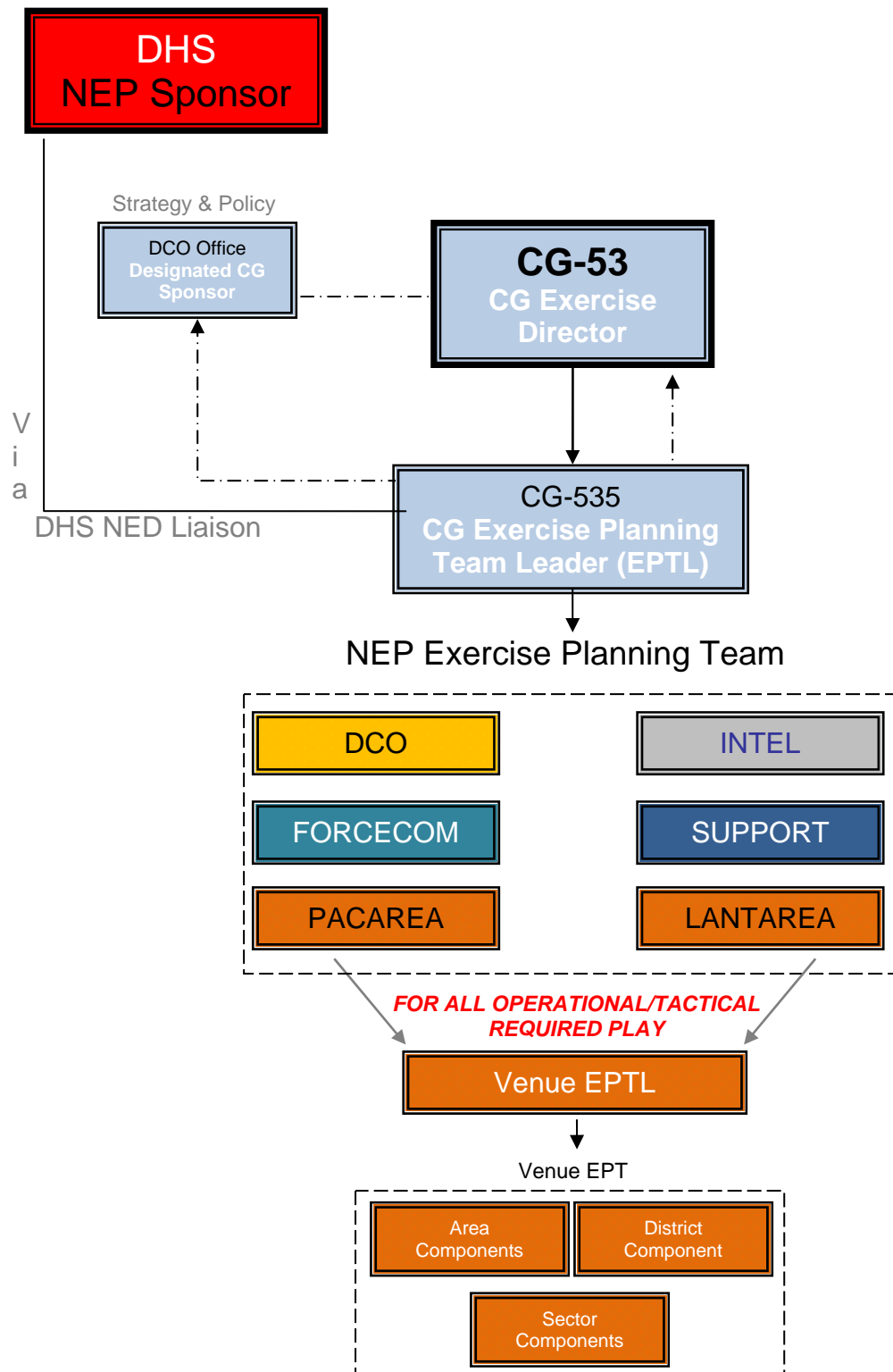
* NOTE: Established CG contingencies have been associated with primary NLE themes, which may cross several CG contingencies.

Coast Guard Exercise Directors

<i>NEP Tiers</i>	<i>CG Director</i>
Tier I	DCO
Tier II	DCO
Tier III	AREA or District
Tier IV	District or Sector or Unit

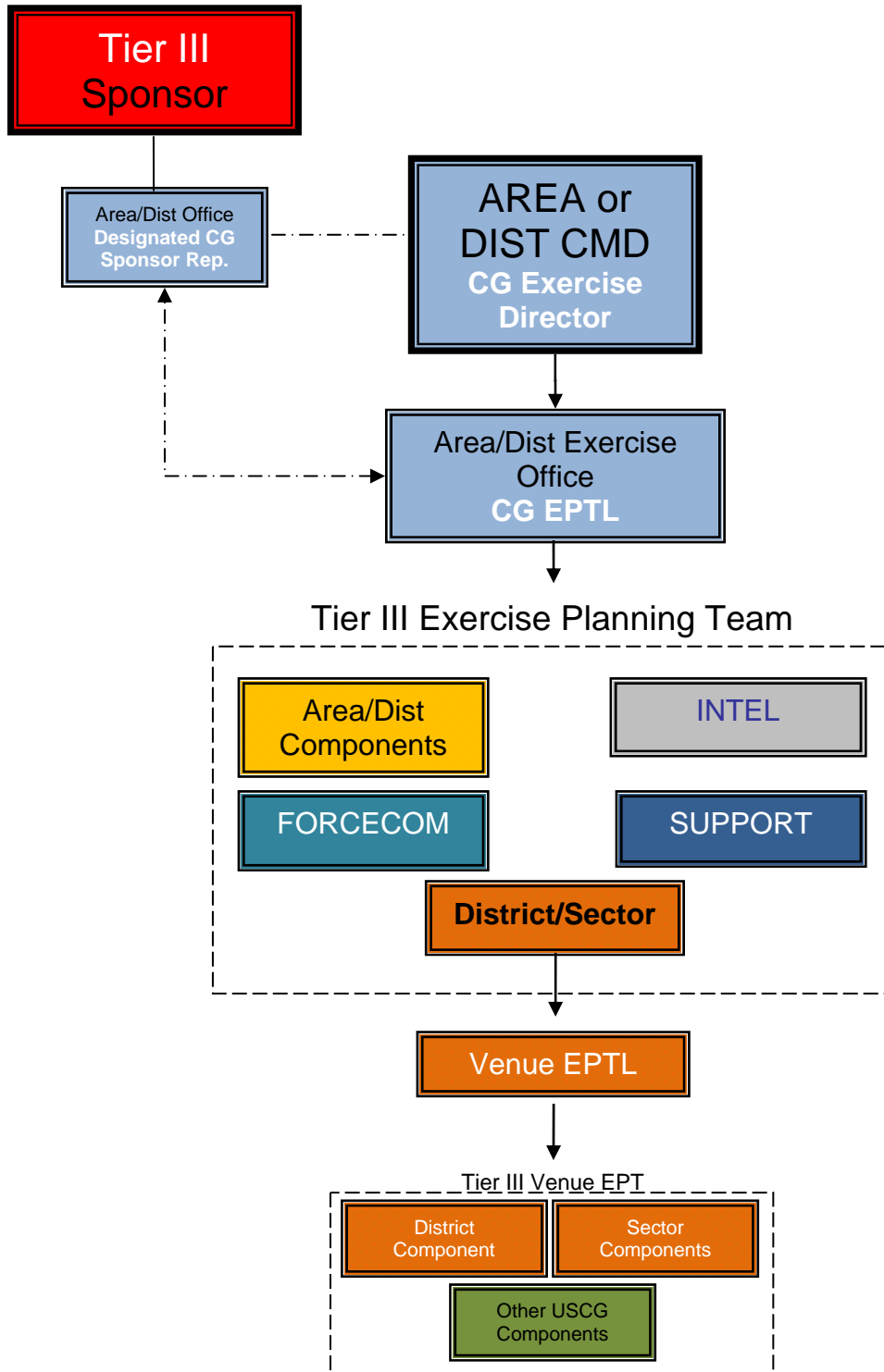
USCG Exercise Planning Team Construct *For NEP Tier I/II*

Figure 3-2



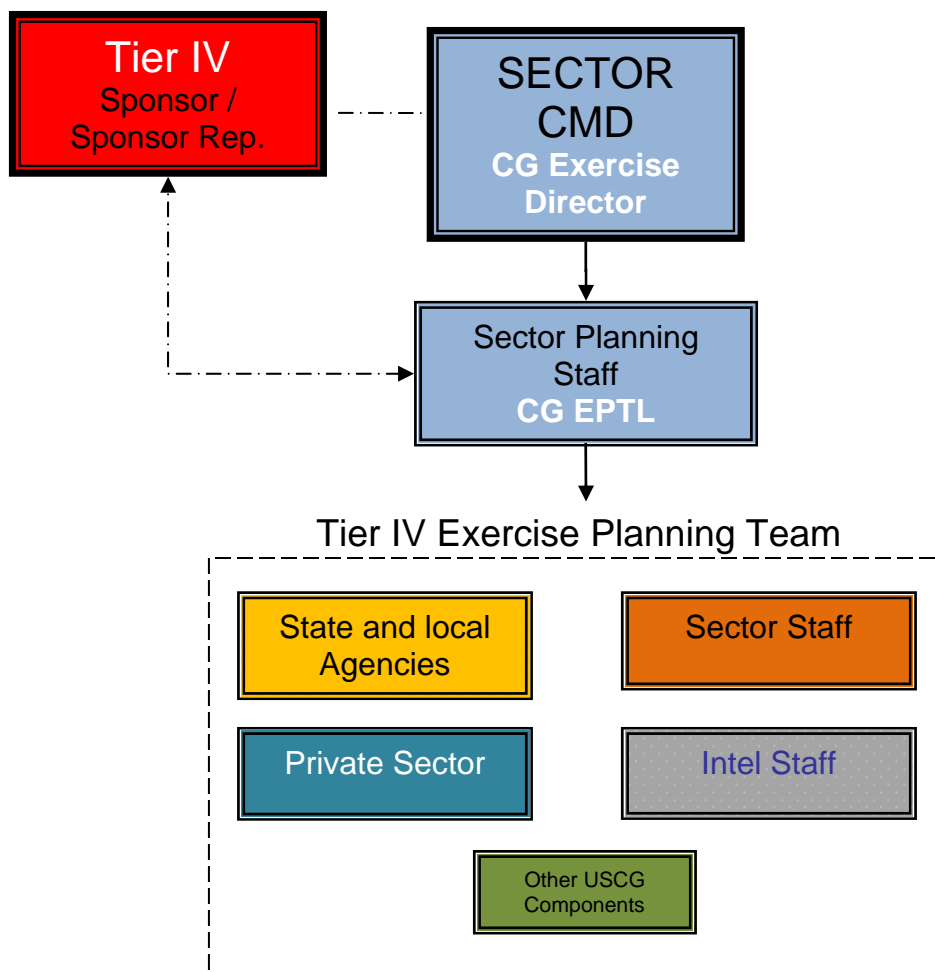
USCG Exercise Planning Team Construct *For NEP Tier III*

Figure 3-3



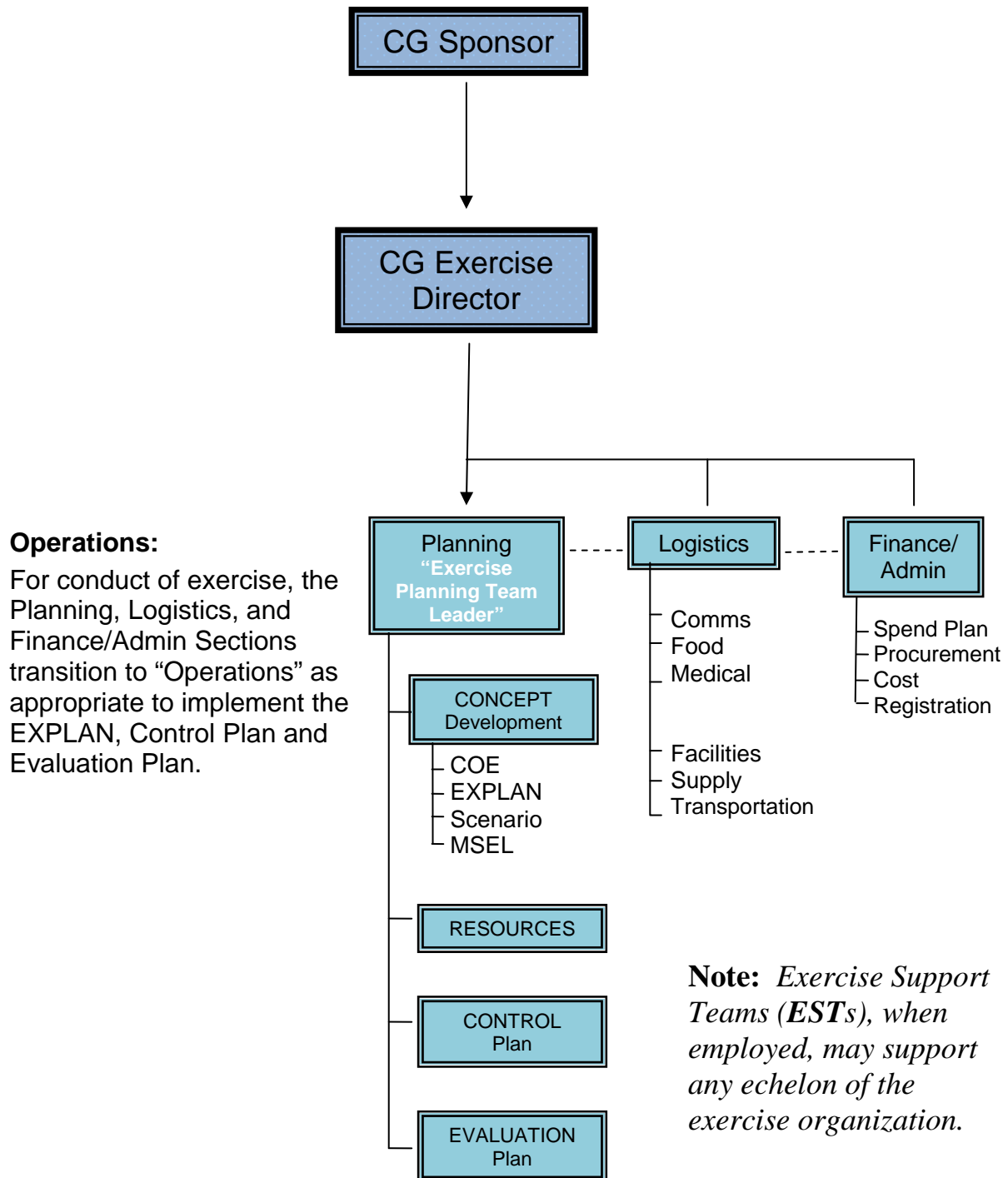
USCG Exercise Planning Team Construct *For NEP Tier IV*

Figure 3-4



Planning Team Organization

Figure 3-1



Acronyms

AAR	After Action Report
CAP	Corrective Actions Plan
CCS	Combatant Commander Support
CG-DCO	Coast Guard Deputy Commandant for Operations
C&O	Concept and Objectives
COE	Concept of Exercise
CPPM	Contingency Preparedness Planning Manual
CPS	Contingency Preparedness System
DCMS	Deputy Commandant for Mission Support
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DOG	Deployable Operations Group
DRG	Domestic Readiness Group
DSF	Deployable Specialized Force
ED	Exercise Director
EEP SC	Exercise & Evaluation Program Steering Committee
EPT	Exercise Planning Team
EPTL	Exercise Planning Team Leader
ES	Exercise Sponsor
ESC	Executive Steering Committee
EST	Exercise Support Team
EXPLAN	Exercise Plan
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
HSPD	Homeland Security Presidential Directive
IP	Improvement Plan
LL	Lessons Learned
MSEL	Master Scenario Events List
MTEP	Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan
NED	National Exercise Division
NEP	National Exercise Program
NESC	National Exercise Simulation Center
NEXS	National Exercise Schedule
NLE	National Level Exercise
OPR	Offices of Primary Responsibility
PLE	Principal-Level Exercise
RAMP	Remedial Action Management Program
RP	Resource Proposal

Enclosure (4) to COMDTINST 3500.6

SME	Subject Matter Expert
SPD	Strategic Planning Directive
TEPW	Training and Exercise Planning Workshop
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USG	United States Government
VEPT	Venue Exercise Planning Team
VEPTL	Venue Exercise Planning Team Leader
WJTSC	Worldwide Joint Training and Scheduling Conference